

## I am Eve

the bad girl, the evil woman.

I stand accused, and sentenced. without a trial. for life.

Because of my single action, millions of individuals have been born with 'original sin', have been guilty even before they acted, doomed before they started. I alone have been held responsible<sup>1</sup> for this sad and pathetic fallen race. Therefore, let me begin by correcting this: if I were free *not* to fall in the first place, *they* were free not to fall after me; and if I were *not* free, then I can't be held responsible--for my fall or theirs.

Now, let us further examine the charges, let us correctly define that action.

I have been condemned for choosing knowledge over ignorance--the fruit I ate came from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In a society that praises pursuit of knowledge and honours men of wisdom, why have I been viewed with disfavour? Had Adam reached out first, would he have been so rebuked? --Or is the state of ignorance requisite for women only? (Histories pass *on* Socrates, they pass *over* Aspasia.)

In the same vein, I chose experience over innocence. In a context of attitudes that value experience, the disapproval of my action can only imply the desire that women, like children, live in a state of innocence.

I have also been condemned for disobedience. If that were the issue, then why wasn't the tree so named--'the tree of obedience and disobedience' or 'the tree of temptation'. By naming it what it was not, God either deliberately tempted me, or deliberately deceived me. And *he* should be judged, not I.

Perhaps though, the tree really was a tree of knowledge. In that case, one should wonder what insecurities led God to prefer obedience over knowledge. Indeed, one should wonder why he went so far as to forbid knowledge. The reason is evident in Genesis (3:22-23): he didn't want us to equal him. He sent us out of Eden to prevent our eating from the tree of life, because already we were as wise as he for having eaten from

the tree of knowledge, and if we had made it to the tree of life before he found us, we would've been immortal as well--we would've been as godly as he.

And that takes me onward, for counted among my sins is that of pride.

Considering that later, through his son, God commands us to 'follow in his footsteps', I find the label of pride odd for the action that would do just that--make me like God. Furthermore, I find it odd to be condemned for being *like* God when, after all, he created us *in his image* (Gen 1:26-27). And God certainly is proud: to create us in his image can be called narcissistic, and to prefer us to spend our time admiring him rather than learning about him is equally evidential of pride. (As an aside, I would think that my knowledge would increase my admiration; that wasn't why I ate the fruit, but if it was, would it have mattered? Did God ever ask my intent?)

I have also been charged with a lack of faith. Yet I took it *on faith* in the first place that God told us not to eat from the tree: remember, he gave the command to Adam before I even existed (Gen 2:16-17).<sup>2</sup> Further, I had faith in the serpent, I trusted the serpent to be telling the truth. Is it dishonourable to trust?

And is it reprehensible to act on that trust, as I did then in offering the fruit to another, to Adam? God commanded innocence, then held me responsible for an act of innocent intent. For how could I know my faith was misplaced? How could I know the serpent was evil until I had knowledge of good and evil? By telling us not to eat of the tree, he insisted on ignorance--but then held us responsible, for an act of ignorance.

Lastly, I have been condemned for using my reason, for it is through the exercise of reason that I decided to eat the fruit. The serpent's explanation of God's motives (Gen 3:5) seemed very reasonable to me. God's command on the other hand, not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil because then I'd die, seemed a touch *unreasonable*. Where is the fault in using that faculty given to me by God? The fault is not mine, but God's--he made reason guide our will and left our reason prey to deceit.

Or did he? History has it that the serpent's words were false, that I *was* deceived.

But God's explanation (Gen 3:22 "Behold, the man is become as one of us") is identical to the serpent's (Gen 3:5 "Ye shall be as gods"): the serpent was telling the truth.<sup>3</sup> And so I stand condemned, for listening to truth. And for offering that truth to others.

---

<sup>1</sup> Even though Adam was beside me through it all (Gen 3:6) and made not one objection. And, of course, also ate the fruit.

<sup>2</sup> I don't outrule the possibility that the command therefore was meant only for Adam-- God knew that knowledge in the hands of *men* is a dangerous thing.

<sup>3</sup> And in fact *God* lied: he said we would die (Gen 3:3) if we ate the fruit of that tree, and we didn't--at least not for several hundred years.